

# 25th Anniversary *The Onyx Informer*

Founded in 1972

Northeastern's Newspaper Designed for People of Color

February-March 1998

## In The Beginning...

Conway Downing

"In the black community, there has been for a long time now, and especially in recent years, a protest aimed at the American (white) news media for its apparent lack of fair news coverage in areas related to the black community..."

"As a sort of alternative to the established news media there are now a number of newspapers totally owned by Black People. The purpose of these "Black Newspapers" is not to offer biased news coverage in turn but to donate full coverage to those 'news worthy' events that affect Black People"

Ted Thomas,  
Editor-in-Chief  
Onyx Informer  
October 24, 1972

On November 3, 1972 Thomas realized this dream of creating a newspaper to cover aspects of black life (as it related to Northeastern University) with the creation of *The Onyx*. With the assistance of 5 other core staff members (Joyce Clark, Ileen Dotson, Harold Hunt, Barbara Ellis and Donna Deans) Thomas' brainchild covered a vast array of topics including: news, culture, entertainment, politics, history, sports and other topics directly and indirectly affected the black student community at NU and the adjoining communities.

Originally designed as a vehicle to allow journalism majors to gain experience in its first year of existence, *The Onyx* derived 6 major purposes to achieve this:

1. To provide work-study jobs for black students who wished to obtain newspaper experience
2. Allow journalism majors the chance to experiment with their creativity and to develop good journalistic style
3. To contain a literary section that provided an outlet for black students interested in the arts
4. Inform black students and community residents of the events that surround them
5. Announce events held in the community and other colleges
- To educate black people to their position and potential to the university world

The newspaper re-

quired tight organization as well great flexibility for its staff during its early years due to the pressures of school. In order to avert the possibility of these pressures from becoming problematic, every staff member, regardless of position had to learn every phase of the newspaper operation from proof-reading to layout to writing captions for photographs.

During the summer time, *The Onyx* became a "project" newspaper by having workshops detailing different journalism techniques such as classes on putting a newspaper together and techniques of layout.

A particularly curious fact about *The Onyx*, as well as most black newsletters of that time (according to the *Onyx's* history notes), was that most of the core staff members were women. As a result, *The Onyx* concentrated on doing studies

to determine the number of female journalists put in co-op jobs as opposed to men and promoted female forums.

At the height of the *Onyx Informer's* popularity, it was not uncommon to see the paper publish twice a month without fail. Despite the reasons behind its creation, *The Onyx* was lauded by the other Northeastern news publications

for its insightful articles that brought the issues of blacks on the campuses as well as in the neighboring communities to its pages. *The Onyx Informer*, also received praises from black faculty and staff members and also received an award from the John D. O'Bryant African-American Institute for Most Outstanding Organization (circa 1992).

The paper also tinkered with its format some years by changing it from tabloid to magazine and included poetry

tion afloat, some of the paper's staff members through the years have not been able to donate the necessary time to keep the paper in circulation. Thus bringing about instances when *The Onyx* would publish with great irregularity, a far cry from the papers glory years of publishing twice a month (according to some alumni it was not uncommon to see *The Onyx* publish one year then disappear the next).

The most serious period of inactivity of the publication occurred between 1995 and early 1997 almost threatened the paper's existence. *The Onyx* was given an ultimatum in order to keep its survival: publish during the 1996-1997 school year or be wiped out as a student organization. The death of *The Onyx Informer* would have become a reality, had it not been for the efforts of Media Advisor Bob Sprague and Dean of Special Support Services, Ella Robertson; who both put out an appeal for students to occupy the vacant positions of the paper. The result of this appeal was a four page paper put together by a staff of seven members most of which had no prior newspaper experience.

Although, severe budget cuts by the media board have relegated the paper to being able to publish only 3 issues per school year (one per quarter), the paper's mission has still not changed: continue to be a voice for the minority populace of the Northeastern campus and its surrounding communities.

## What's Inside...

African-American Institute's 30 Year Anniversary...pg. 2

Latin American Student Organization's 10 Year Anniversary...pg. 3

Conversation With Dean Motley...pg. 5

Expressions...pg. 4

Black Facts...pg. 7

Coming Events...pg. 7



# The Onyx Informer

## Co-Editors

Conway A. Downing  
DeeJay Mills  
Núri Chandler-Smith

## Photo Editor

### Staff

Jared Bridgeway  
Tamika Cameron  
Benjamin "Benyasi" Carter  
Celina DeLeon  
Raphael Domino  
Eric Esteves  
Jamila Hill  
Dawn Jones  
Phil Kaseki  
Alex Mitchner  
Maribel Soto  
Janelle K. Wood

### Contributors

Tamra Griffith  
Tanya Martinez  
Melissa Rivera

## Editorial

As Cad and I finish up the last bits of this issue, we can only think of the struggle we have gone through to print this. I first off would like to send our deepest apologies to the staff of *The Onyx Informer*. You have all worked so hard and met all of the deadlines back in October of 1997.

It is now February of 1998. We would like to thank the *Onyx* staff for their dedication and commitment. We would like to apologize to Raphael Domino and Eric Esteves. Their articles were great, but were dated and could not be included.

We would also like to send our apologies to the readers. We had promised you three issues of *The Onyx Informer* this year, one per a quarter. We are late, but we will still try to make good on our promise.

Now, I realize that the big question is "what happened?". Well everyone deserves an explanation, so here it is. During the fall quarter, we planned to print on November 3, 1997, 25 years to the date. School began to get very hectic then and we decided to push it back to December, so not to rush it and do a half-assed job, as we did in May 1997. We pushed it too close to the winter break, and decided to postpone it until the winter quarter.

Well, January came and we got together and we were ready. The first problem we encountered, was that many of the disks we received were formatted for an IBM when the computer we use is a Macintosh. We had all the files converted and attempted to publish the issue, only to find that our computer was not working. Bob Sprague, our advisor, got to the bottom of it, and discovered that memory card was broken. The next disaster was that the repair guy who was supposed to fix it, got sick, putting us back even more. Finally, the computer was repaired and we began.

I would just like to thank everyone again for their time and commitment. We will begin working on the next issue immediately. Just remember that Positive Energy Always Creates Elevation.

PEACE DEEJAY

### The Onyx Letter Policy

The Onyx Informer welcomes letters from our readers. A letter to the Editor or any stories printed needs the writer's full name, year, major, or title, and phone number or email address for verification. Letters may be edited due to time or space constraints. Letters may be mailed to the following address:

The Onyx Informer  
430 Curry Student Center  
360 Huntington Ave  
Boston, MA 02115

## 30th Anniversary of the John D. O'Bryant African-American Institute

Alexandra Mitchner

As the centennial celebration of Northeastern University approaches, so does the 30th birthday of the John D. O'Bryant African-American Institute. The celebration weekend kicks off with a reception on May 1st and continues until the awards banquet on Sunday, May 3, 1998. A concert and a grand ball are also features of the weekend festivities.

The Institute, as students prefer to call it, was born in the spring of 1968 in the shadows of the civil rights movement, only a short period after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Black students attending Northeastern University decided to mobilize and reduce alienation on campus. They presented 13 demands to the president at the time, Asa S. Knowles. One result was the African-American Institute.

The most notable change occurred in 1993 when the African-American Institute

took on the name of John D. O'Bryant, former Vice-President of the Division of Student Affairs. Some very necessary renovations to the Institute went along with the dedication.

"It was extremely appropriate that the Institute take on the name of a man who epitomized the belief that education and activism were central in the lives of people of African origin," said Ms. Lula Petty-Edwards, Associate Dean and Director of the Institute.

In the creation of the Institute, the specific areas of concentration were designed to be education, culture, and an active role in society. Today, 3 decades later, the focus is still the same.

"I participate in a tutoring program held here, at the Institute, for children from B.H. A. (Boston Housing Authority)," said Karimah Ellis, Sophomore, from New York. "I feel good helping the kids."

There are a number of services readily available to all

Northeastern students at the Institute: free tutoring in 13 different subjects such as Biology and Chemistry, Writing and Study Skills services such as writing essays and interpreting literature, Single Parent Support Groups, Peer Counseling, Financial Aid Information, and many other Counseling/Educational services.

The third-floor library has an information retrieval service, many books on African-American Issues, and a film-video collection.

"This library is one of the key components to begin to crumble the wall of racial ignorance," said Ms. Petty-Edwards. "White students need to come here, too."

A significant problem that this facility has faced in the past and is still trying to solve is that even with all the opportunities available for growth in so many different areas, involvement by African-American students is lacking.

see 30years, page 6



Unity Awards Banquet circa 1977 - photo credit unknown

## EGYPTIAN GATEWAY IN BOSTON

Dawn Jones

Many of us don't realize it but the Museum of Fine Arts, located only a few blocks up from campus, contains the second largest Egyptian object in the country. The Coptos Gateway has been re-erected in the large Egyptian Sculpture Gallery located on the second floor of the MFA.

Originally this amazing twenty-four ton, seventeen foot tall sandstone temple was excavated by Dow Dunham in 1924. The gate was first built by Ptolemy VIII (116 B.C.) and then redecorated by the em-

peror Nero (A.D.54). Later on it was taken apart and used as a foundation for a building during the Medieval Period. Extraordinarily it still stands today.

At first no one could figure out the order of the blocks, until curator Nancy Thomas of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art needed a centerpiece for her exhibition "The American Discovery of Ancient Egypt." After the removal of centuries of dirt and grime much of the original paint, and even gold leaf, was discovered.

CBI Engineering was called to design an earthquake proof means of mounting the blocks that would also allow them to be suspended individually, in beam that would be hidden inside a reconstruction of the missing portions of the original gateway.

After being exhibited in Los Angeles and St. Louis, the gateway was then returned to Boston, where it remains on view. The Conservation and restorations were supported by a grant from the Swiss company Gily AG.

**The Onyx Informer**

**Co-Editors** Conway A. Downing  
DeeJay Mills  
**Photo Editor** Núri Chandler-Smith

**Staff**  
Jared Bridgeway  
Tamika Cameron  
Benjamin "Benyasi" Carter  
Celina DeLeon  
Raphael Domino  
Eric Esteves  
Jamila Hill  
Dawn Jones  
Phil Kaseki  
Alex Mitchner  
Maribel Soto  
Janelle K. Wood

**Contributors**  
Tamra Griffith  
Tanya Martinez  
Melissa Rivera

**Editorial**

As Cad and I finish up the last bits of this issue, I only think of the struggle we have gone through to print this. I first off would like to send our deepest apologies to the staff of *The Onyx Informer*. You have all worked so hard and met all of the deadlines back in October of 1997.

It is now February of 1998. We would like to thank the *Onyx* staff for their dedication and commitment. We would like to apologize to Raphael Domino and Eric Esteves. Their articles were great, but were dated and could not be included.

We would also like to send our apologies to the readers. We had promised you three issues of *The Onyx Informer* this year, one per a quarter. We are late, but we will still try to make good on our promise.

Now, I realize that the big question is "what happened?". Well everyone deserves an explanation, so here it is. During the fall quarter, we planned to print on November 3, 1997, 25 years to the date. School began to get very hectic then and we decided to push it back to December, so not to rush it and do a half-assed job, as we did in May 1997. We pushed it too close to the winter break, and decided to postpone it until the winter quarter.

Well, January came and we got together and we were ready. The first problem we encountered, was that many of the files we received were formatted for an IBM when the computer we use is a Macintosh. We had all the files converted and attempted to publish the issue, only to find that our computer was not working. Bob Sprague, our advisor, got to the bottom of it, and discovered that memory card was broken. The next disaster was that the repair guy who was supposed to fix it, got sick, putting us back even more. Finally, the computer was repaired and we began.

I would just like to thank everyone again for their time and commitment. We will begin working on the next issue immediately. Just remember that Positive Energy Always Creates Elevation.  
PEACE - DEEJAY

**The Onyx Letter Policy**

The *Onyx* Informer welcomes letters from our readers. A letter to the Editor or any stories printed needs the writer's full name, year, major, or title, and phone number or email address for verification. Letters may be edited due to time or space constraints. Letters may be mailed to the following address:

The *Onyx* Informer  
430 Curry Student Center  
360 Huntington Ave  
Boston, MA 02115



Unity Awards Banquet circa 1977 - photo credit unknown

**EGYPTIAN GATEWAY IN BOSTON**

Dawn Jones

Many of us don't realize it but the Museum of Fine Arts, located only a few blocks up from campus, contains the second largest Egyptian object in the country. The Coptos Gateway has been re-erected in the large Egyptian Sculpture Gallery located on the second floor of MFA.

Originally this amazing twenty-four-ton, seventeen foot tall sandstone temple was excavated by Dows Dunham in 1924. The gate was first built by Ptolemy VIII (116 B.C.) and then redecorated by the emperors Nero (A.D. 54). Later on it was taken apart and used as a foundation for a building during the Medieval Period. Extraordinarily it still stands today.

At first no one could figure out the order of the blocks, until curator Nancy Thomas of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art needed a centerpiece for her exhibition "The American Discovery of Ancient Egypt."

After the removal of centuries of dirt and grime much of the original paint, and even gold leaf, was discovered.

CBI Engineering was called to design an earthquake proof means of mounting the blocks that would allow them to be suspended individually, in beams that would be hidden inside a reconstruction of the missing portions of the original gateway.

After being exhibited in Los Angeles and St. Louis, the gateway was then returned to Boston, where it remains on view. The Conservation and restorations were supervised by a grant from the Swiss company Gilag AG.

**30th Anniversary of the John D. O'Bryant African-American Institute**

Alexandra Mitchner

As the centennial celebration of Northeastern University approaches, so does the 30th birthday of the John D. O'Bryant African-American Institute. The celebration weekend kicks off with a reception on May 1st and continues until the awards banquet on Sunday, May 3, 1998. A concert and a grand ball are also features of the weekend festivities.

The Institute, as students prefer to call it, was born in the spring of 1968 in the shadows of the civil rights movement, only a short period after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Black students attending Northeastern University decided to mobilize and reduce alienation on campus. They presented 13 demands to the president at the time, Asa S. Knowles. One result was the African-American Institute.

The most notable change occurred in 1993 when the African-American Institute

took on the name of John D. O'Bryant, former Vice-President of the Division of Student Affairs. Some very necessary renovations to the Institute went along with the dedication.

"It was extremely appropriate that the Institute take on the name of a man who epitomized the belief that education and activism were central in the lives of people of African origin," said Ms. Lula Petty-Edwards, Associate Dean and Director of the Institute.

In the creation of the Institute, the specific areas of concentration were designed to be education, culture, and an active role in society. Today, 3 decades later, the focus is still the same.

"I participate in a tutoring program held here, at the Institute, for children from B.H.A. (Boston Housing Authority)," said Karimah Ellis, Sophomore, from New York. "I feel good helping the kids."

There are a number of services readily available to all

see 30years, page 6

**The Onyx Informer****February-March 1998****Page 3****LASO's Tenth Anniversary**

MARIBEL SOTO

Latin American Student Organization (LASO), one of the most active and largest organizations on campus, will celebrate its tenth anniversary in the Spring of 1998. LASO which was originally the Puerto Rican Student Organization (PRSO) first began in 1987-1988 with five Puerto Rican males. Their first meeting was January 14, 1998. PRSO was a political and cultural based organization formed with the intentions of finding other "Boricuas" on campus. As each year passed, more students of other Latino backgrounds attended Northeastern University and became members of PRSO.

It was extremely appropriate that the Institute take on the name of a man who epitomized the belief that education and activism were central in the lives of people of African origin," said Ms. Lula Petty-Edwards, Associate Dean and Director of the Institute.

"I participate in a tutoring program held here, at the Institute, for children from B.H.A. (Boston Housing Authority)," said Karimah Ellis, Sophomore, from New York. "I feel good helping the kids."

There are a number of services readily available to all

see 30years, page 6

Latin American Student Organization (LASO), one of the most active and largest organizations on campus, will celebrate its tenth anniversary in the Spring of 1998. LASO which was originally the Puerto Rican Student Organization (PRSO) first began in 1987-1988 with five Puerto Rican males. Their first meeting was January 14, 1998. PRSO was a political and cultural based organization formed with the intentions of finding other "Boricuas" on campus. As each year passed, more students of other Latino backgrounds attended Northeastern University and became members of PRSO.

It was extremely appropriate that the Institute take on the name of a man who epitomized the belief that education and activism were central in the lives of people of African origin," said Ms. Lula Petty-Edwards, Associate Dean and Director of the Institute.

"I participate in a tutoring program held here, at the Institute, for children from B.H.A. (Boston Housing Authority)," said Karimah Ellis, Sophomore, from New York. "I feel good helping the kids."

There are a number of services readily available to all



photo credit: J. D. Levine

**Tobin Mentor Program**

Benjamin "Benyasi" Carter

The Tobin Mentor Program, is the brainchild of former Northeastern University president, John Curry. After Curry developed the idea, he handed it over to Dr. Holly Carter, who developed, implemented, and still directs the program. The mission of the program is to "adopt" a series of 6th grade classes from Maurice J. Tobin school, in Mission Hill, with the pledge to give them a full scholarship to the Northeastern University if they gain acceptance into any of Northeastern's programs.

As the Latino/a [student] population at Northeastern University continues to grow and the first generation American continue to assimilate, LASO will have to concentrate more on culture preservation..." said Luis Hernandez, former president of LASO, 1996-1997. Throughout the ten years the struggles and accomplishments have strengthened and matured the organization.

"The biggest struggle that LASO has is the student retention in the university. It's easy to recruit people in LASO, but the problem is keeping the students in N.U. One of the purposes of the Cultural Center was to retain students." Other setbacks according to Juan L. Pimentel, a mddler pursuing a major in International Business/Marketing and member of LASO for three years, was the cut of the LLACCS program by 77%.

"The mission of the Latino Student Cultural Center (LSCC) exists to bring together the social, cultural, and academic aspects in Northeastern University's Latino/a student lives..." said Linda Delgado the past de-

cade," said Medina. The changes that have occurred have positively made a great impact on the organization and has improved it in many ways. "LASO was once run by male leaders until the women took a stand and became recognized. They made a voice for Latina women and took a stand for change," said Terry Menas, former President of LASO, 1993-1994 and now Assistant Director of the LSCC.

"LASO represents the Latinos/as in Northeastern University, alumni, the N.U. Latino staff, and the community." It consists of Latinos/as, Latin Americans, and non-Latino members.

As the Latino/a [student]

population at Northeastern University continues to grow and the first generation American continue to assimilate, LASO will have to concentrate more on culture preservation..." said Luis Hernandez, former president of LASO, 1996-1997. Throughout the ten years the struggles and accomplishments have strengthened and matured the organization.

"The biggest struggle that LASO has is the student retention in the university. It's easy to recruit people in LASO, but the problem is keeping the students in N.U. One of the purposes of the Cultural Center was to retain students." Other setbacks according to Juan L. Pimentel, a mddler pursuing a major in International Business/Marketing and member of LASO for three years, was the cut of the LLACCS program by 77%.

"The mission of the Latino Student Cultural Center (LSCC) exists to bring together the social, cultural, and academic aspects in Northeastern University's Latino/a student lives..." said Linda Delgado the past de-

cade," said Medina. The changes that have occurred have positively made a great impact on the organization and has improved it in many ways. "LASO was once run by male leaders until the women took a stand and became recognized. They made a voice for Latina women and took a stand for change," said Terry Menas, former President of LASO, 1993-1994 and now Assistant Director of the LSCC.

"LASO represents the Latinos/as in Northeastern University, alumni, the N.U. Latino staff, and the community." It consists of Latinos/as, Latin Americans, and non-Latino members.

As the Latino/a [student]



LASO members at the LSCC inauguration - photo credit: J. D. Levine

cade," said Medina. The changes that have occurred have positively made a great impact on the organization and has improved it in many ways. "LASO was once run by male leaders until the women took a stand and became recognized. They made a voice for Latina women and took a stand for change," said Terry Menas, former President of LASO, 1993-1994 and now Assistant Director of the LSCC.

"LASO represents the Latinos/as in Northeastern University, alumni, the N.U. Latino staff, and the community." It consists of Latinos/as, Latin Americans, and non-Latino members.

# EXPRESSIONS

## Wrong or Right?

Melissa Rivera

Wrong or right?

These are no longer the reasons we fight.

Is it the color of my skin

that makes you so grim?

Or is it the texture of my hair?

I don't think that's very fair;

My whole life is a fight to make the wrong things right.

But what about those who don't care,

will they just sit back and stare?

No, they must do what is right and join in our fight.

This fight is not to be fought with guns and knives

but yet, this struggle is necessary to save our lives.

I know that you don't think that the end is near

but this hatred around me has become so clear.

It scares me to see what has become of this world

I get made fun of just for being a Hispanic girl.

And what about what happened to your brother?

When those kids made fun of his mother?

These jokes are not all fun and games

because they bring so many

people pain.

It makes me want to cry when I see the little kids lie

just to make sure that their friends don't die

I'm not really sure why I feel this way

but I feel so strong that I know it won't go away  
So please everyone be strong  
and turn away from all the wrong.

become of this

## Untitled

TANYA MARTINEZ

LAND OF THE FREE HOME OF THE BRAVE  
SUPPOSEDLY EQUALS IS WHAT WE PROCLAIM  
CAN MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS LIVE TOGETHER WITH LOVE?  
WHERE ONE MANS PRIDE IS NOT LIFTING HIM ABOVE TO LIVE IN A WORLD WHERE NO ONES INFERIOR  
WHERE COLOR OF SKIN IS



JUST AN EXTERIOR

BUT THE TRUTHS OF THIS COUNTRY DID NOT DISAPPEAR

CHURCH BURNINGS, WHITE PRESIDENTS, SKINHEADS OUT TO FEAR

CAN WE TRUST OUR POLICE? OUR LEADERS? OUR BROTHERS?

WILL THEIR IGNORANCE CONSUME THEM  
TO DISFAVOR ANOTHER?  
CAN WE ENDEAVOR TOGETHER AND PROTECT EACHOTHER?

AM I SAFE IN MY SKIN IN THIS COUNTRY OF GREAT SIN?

RICKY LAKE, JENNY JONES, JERRY SPRINGER

CONSTANTLY REMINDS US THAT HATRED STILL Lingers THE NEWS IS ENTHRALLED WITH VICTIMS OF HATE CRYING FOR CHANGE THAT WE MAY OR MAY NOT GET DO YOU CONTINUE TO PUT PEOPLE DOWN?

DO YOU STAB THE HEART OF YOUR BRETHREN TO TURN UP YOUR FROWN?

PUT DOWN YOUR SWORDS OF IGNORANCE AND SORROW

LIFT UP YOUR HEARTS AND LOVE FOR TOMORROW FOR TOMORROW MAY BE A NEW WORLD OF AMOR THE CHOICE IS OURS TO CONTINUE THIS WAR

## Voices

DeeJay Mills

Reflections; on a life, a shared hope, formulating a common cause, joined by adhesive joy;  
a differed dream, dry, slightly moistened by Voices,  
catching tears and singing,  
the individual forums through a collective podium,  
enhanced by one who is deaf to defeat, and blind to reality.

Voices of the past, some distinctly familiar,  
while others are unknown, due to generational ignorance,  
lack of participation, coupled with time and new struggle;  
they screamed with a special urgency to their cry.

"Don't forget us!"

They pleaded to keep hope alive.  
They wished for us to recall their pains, remember their struggles, and honor their accomplishments, all of which were unselfishly done for our benefit.

The last of the fading voices shrilled, "Don't let us have lived in vain"  
I contemplated the concerns as we marched along with pride,  
smiles, some with our care in the world until then,  
from the East, I heard more voices.

These of our future, those to come, as we cross their paths in a retrogressive facade of the mirrored images,

designed to define progressed demands. "Prepare us for your dream", they said, asking for us to begin our legacy for them to experience.

They requested that we supply them with the tools to empower.

On hands and knees, these voices begged us to secure them a spot in our future,

and to assure them the continuity along the paradoxical road of survival; the same path which we currently traveled.

As I focused on the path, I could hear our own voices, proud voices confused by the changing textures of the ground below us,

not yet realizing that we are the missing link between levels of Utopia, trapped in interdimensional cells,

screaming for help, "Where do we go from here?"

"How do we get there?"

And "What do we do when we arrive?" Then a gust of reassuring wind from the West struck our backs,

as we looked to see the first rays of the sun rising in the East, yelling to be heard over the approaching clouds.

They wished for me to remind us not to count them out,

to show them where to go and how to get there, and what we shall do if and when we arrive.

As the voices disappeared in a dazzling flash of light,

I could see one more voice, very familiar, split like the tongue of a snake, carrying the message of the yin and yang.

The first side of this heavenly voice spoke through live personas, "Don't be too happy", it said, the optimistic pessimist, seeing the glass half empty for better results,

"The dream has been accomplished, now it is time to fulfill the promise" The promise made to and by the many voices.

traveling through the circuits of my mind,

electrifying my own voice in an illustrious illumination, creating Midnight SunShine.

The voice echoed throughout the silence of multiple cries, as it transformed to a more fearful voice.

This voice spoke with assertiveness and aggression, masked with serenity.

This was the voice of The Beast, the voice of our enemies to the West, who we defeated and left to die; the voice we presumed deceased.

The voice which would look us in the

eyes, and strike us dead without hesitation. This enemy's voice waited its turn and said...

"Congratulations!!! You've come so far and fought so valiantly, you must be so proud of yourselves" Then with a slight twist,

the voice threw such a skilled curveball, that only the most well trained ears could detect,

as they once more attempted to strike us out,

"You must be so tired and glad to be able to finally relax"

This horrifically loud voice from a silent enemy,

smiling, hand extended as it tried to knife us with our own acceptance.

Voices, these many voices I hear, mixed in a pool of blood, sweat, and tears.

And I must rise and come ashore before I drown.

Reflections; amplified through spiritual voices;

Voices, forcing me to uplift and proceed,

and what of my reflections?

What do they mean?

How do I react?

Well...

as I surface from my aquatic journey, of Voices, and bask in my reflections...

I smile =)

# Tongue-Tied

Tamika Cameron

What is this East coast vs. West coast "beef" really all about? The media tends to place blame on the music industry. When linking causes of death to New York rappers and Los Angeles rappers society has accomplished their goal of finding a way to account for this on going feud. Wrong.

The music industry has provided a safe haven for youths to assimilate with one another. Music is what they have in common, not what separates them from each other.

This "beef" derives from communication breeches in regional sectors of our country. In other words, we don't always understand each other. The accepted meaning of "What's Up?" (how are you doing?) on the East coast may translate to "Can I borrow some money?" on the West coast. Though slightly exaggerated, this illustrates my concern: misunderstandings play a significant role in how we get along.

Misinterpretations can often lead to confrontations and mishaps beyond our control. Society's understandings of how these misinterpretations can greatly affect the outcome of numerous situations will enable the peace factor to actively play a role in America.

I am a California native. I was content with my standing in the community and how I could relate to my peers. Colloquialisms in Los Angeles have evolved with the passing of time. What was permissible to say during the 80's has been quickly replaced with the new slang of the 90's. I kept up with the current styles, trends and language. However, nothing I learned in California prepared me for the language barrier I would be forced to encounter in the East when I came to Northeastern University.

My prior knowledge of the "ins" and "outs" had to be disregarded. I was in a new territory, where to keep up meant to adapt. When I arrived at La Guardia Airport I could hear the mixture of "slang" with accents from the West Indies. The whole atmosphere itself was totally different than what I was accustomed to. Not being totally literate in regards to East coast slang, I had a hard time interpreting many phrases. I didn't know where to begin translations upon being approached by a guy that said "Eh sho'ty, you wylin' jugglin' all dat stuff. Let me help you out." The only part that I was successful in translating was the "let me help you out" part.

After explaining my geographical situation, I asked him what he said. He responded in a dialect a little more comprehensible. He said, "Cali kid? No doubt, dats straight, dats straight."

Eventually I learned that he said, "Hey, how are you doing? You have to be completely out of your mind to be carrying all of those suitcases alone!"

If I did not know any better (which I didn't) I would have merely passed his comments off as pick up lines.

It is important to have an understanding of the dialogue in your surroundings. Not being so sure if he really said this or being just a little leery of how she said that can ultimately affect the way in which we deal with one another. Not having a clear understanding of the what the other person meant leaves too much room for misunderstandings.

And I believe that it is this dialogue cognition gap which is the reason behind so many altercations. It's difficult to accept something that you don't completely understand. And with "slang" varying in its way of representation, it is easy to see where this so called "beef" really stems from. Because of my first hand experience where this language contrast predominantly alter people's successful interaction with each other I have created the "Bi-Coastal Vernacular" guide. This list will enable readers to acknowledge how easy it is to confuse the different types of terminology.

see Bi-Coastal Vernacular, page 7

*Do you have:  
Concerns,  
Issues,  
Ideas*

*If so:*

*Join The Onyx Informer Staff  
call 373-2250*

# A Conversation With Dean Keith Motley

Jared K. Bridgeman

At first glance, Dean of Student Services Keith Motley is quite an imposing figure. At roughly 6'6", he seems like the type of guy that would have most teenagers saying "I'm glad that's not my Daddy!". However, after one brief conversation with Dean Motley, let it be said that he not only exudes the compassion and patience that so many Black men lack, he also comes across as an ideal mentor for Black youth here at Northeastern. Since Dean Motley is not as widely known throughout the minority community here as he or some others may wish, allow me to introduce him.

My ignorance coerced me into asking Dean Motley if he were the Dean of Minority Student Services, yet he was quick to let me know that although he has special interest in minority affairs, he is the Dean of all Student Services. This title is one he greatly deserves, for Keith Motley has put in more than his share of dedication to Northeastern University and its people. Not only has Dean Motley been on the NU staff since 1978, he also was a student here for both his undergraduate and graduate studies! He says that his love for education derived from his very influential mom, his first teacher. Motley also credits his mother for his exposure to music at a young age, which he has developed to the point where he is now a seasoned violinist.

Dean Motley's achievements and history are interesting enough, but even more enticing to me is his philosophy. Being a fan of intellectual conversation, Dean Motley's profound words had me so drawn in that I almost forgot that I was

conducting an interview. I asked him about the status of the Black student body here at Northeastern. What was his assessment of us? What can we do to elevate the retention rate? What makes you most proud or upset when you walk the halls of NU?

First off, the Dean acknowledged a change in the type of Black student that comes to Northeastern nowadays. He sees more Black students from "well-to-do" environments. Also, he made note ever to grace the halls of a uni-

As far as the statistics about the retention rate of Black students at Northeastern, Motley feels that they can be misleading. He claims the statistics to be vague and that the low retention rate implies an exceeding amount of failure; when in fact although we need to prioritize our dealings while here, financial strife is the main reason for the large amount of Black faces disappearing from NU year after year.

I also asked Dean Motley what if any advice he had for the young Black male student,



Now: Dean Motley circa 1993 - photo credit: unknown

versity. The downfall in this, he feels, is the lack of tradition here at NU among the Black student population. However, the fact that we are here and in decent number is a good thing. As Black students, we are here and for the most part are free to do what we want on campus. However Dean Motley doesn't feel we take full advantage of that. "Independence brings complacency" was the phrase he used, most likely alluding to the lack of Black student activism on campus. This passivity, this "we have something, you get yours" attitude that we seem to have is that which bothers Dean Motley the most when contemplating our situation at NU.



Then: Dean Motley circa early 1980's - photo credit: unknown

probably the greatest minority of all. "You have taken steps with your presence" he told me. He also said that we must recognize our strength and potential as a people, recruiting each other into universities and leading each other toward knowledge. Being enrolled in college as a Black male, Dean Motley says "That student has added three more 'r's" to the traditional "reading, 'riting, and 'ithmetic", and that they are responsibility, respect, and restraint"; taking the responsibility in knowing that you can do, be, and learn more and attempting to attain it; respecting yourself enough to go forth with your plan; and restraining yourself from the many distractions to which it would be so much easier to fall victim.

Behind that deep voice and intimidating demeanor lies a deeply intelligent, compassionate, open-minded man (he likes hip-hop!), with insight that comes from experience that comes from courage that comes from self-respect. Dean Motley, who hopes to become Dr. Motley soon, as he works towards his doctorate at Boston College, hopes to eventually move on to another position where he can have more impact on university policy (University President?). He wants to see an institution with the students at the center. Much respect, Dean Motley, I don't think there's anything you can't accomplish.

# S T O P . . .

## The Violence II

Celina R. De Leon

More than 60 students gathered in the Ell Center Ballroom, October 9, 1997 to learn about the predator studies say will attack 1 out of every 4 women in their lifetime-domestic violence.

Alpha Phi Alpha's second annual Stop the Violence Forum was hosted by member Tyreek Moore and was enriched with three guest speakers. A performed skit drew the attention of the crowd that evening, to the stage and to the topic. Although the raised hand in the skit was stopped in midair, the Forum's speakers carried the message all the way through.

Executive Director of the Mass. Coalition of Battered Women Service Groups and the Jane Doe Safety Fund, Joyce Williams-Mitchell, shared with the crowd her personal bout with domestic violence and the importance of its education.

"There are so many women like me, who had no clue they were being abused. Once you know the reality (of domestic violence), you can never say you didn't know. Once you become aware, you can never turn back," said Williams.

Bonnie Peak-Graham, President of Peak Performance Group Inc., and contributing associate of the Mass. Coalition of Battered Women and the Jane Doe Fund, addressed the audience on the topic of the Battered Women's Syndrome in relation to women of color. According to Peak, 48% of all non-women of color are successful in their defense under the syndrome; women of color- 9%. Peak called on the women in the audience to reform and put an end to such statistics:

"The Womanist/ Feminist movements need to start getting real. Getting real meaning, getting it together with your promise of a future. You can not stay on these campuses isolated. The time is now to act," Peak explained.

Peak further called for the instilling of a new model within our African American communities- one of activism:

"We can not tolerate not being part of the solution of the many problems that plague our communities. It's time for us to stop being tolerant. It's time for us to stop being silent."

Don McPherson of Northeastern's Center for Sports in Society, located on 716 Columbus Ave., addressed the issue of domestic violence in terms of how society views women in general.

"As young boys we are socialized to think that we are better than girls. It's because of this, that men are brought up as: using domination over women," McPherson explained, adding, that it's this stigmatization that allows society to continue viewing women as insignificant, and so in effect, allowing the abuse of our women.

"Every night we watch the news and hear about some form of violence against women. Imagine if we heard that many stories dealing with racial issues, about black men being hung. Would these stories be so prevalent?" McPherson asked the crowd.

The Mass. Coalition of Battered Women Service Groups was incorporated in 1978 as a nonprofit, statewide organization promoting both public education as well as advocacy. Its mission statement: "The Mass. Coalition of Battered Women Service Groups, an organization of member programs, works to ensure that quality, comprehensive services are available statewide to battered women and their children. Our goal is a society that no longer tolerates violence against women and children."

Through its many works: its involvement with public policy making groups, its annual Walk for Women's Safety, its community education program that provides information to professional and community groups whose work brings them into contact with issues involving domestic violence, its children/adolescents department, and its statewide telecommunications network, the Mass. Coalition office continues to provide statewide leadership for the battered women's movement.

The Mass. Coalition of Battered Women Service Groups is located on 14 Beacon St., Suite 507, Boston, MA 02118. Phone: (617) 248-0922 Fax (617) 248-902

## Sexual Harassment at Northeastern University

Jamila Hill

One might assume from all of this that the amount of sexual harassment complaints on this campus are non-existent, but that is not the case.

Sexual assault is not a foreign topic to students at Northeastern University. During the summer orientation, incoming freshmen will watch skits on the outcomes of drinking, domestic violence, and date rape.

As they continue on with their education and become upperclassmen, they might attend a seminar on sexual assault or even discuss sexual harassment amongst their peers.

According to the Office of Affirmative Action, they receive on average one complaint of sexual harassment per week. That number increases at the end of each academic quarter and again at the end of each academic year.

**"Sexual harassment is a current, unacceptable, social behavior..."**

-Mlugeta Abranios

This may stem from the variety of definitions of sexual harassment amongst Northeastern's student population.

"I've been taught from different schools that calling them (females) the slightest name, whistling as they go by, and touching her the wrong way, saying that I'm going to rape her, or disrespecting someone sexually is harassment," said Middler Kalin Mitchell.

"I think that me touching her the wrong way, saying that I'm going to rape her, or disrespecting someone sexually is harassment," said Freshman Stahler Joseph.

"Sexual harassment is a current, unacceptable, social behavior towards another sex based on sex," said Mlugeta Abranios.

According to one counselor at Northeastern's Counseling Center, students really do not know what sexual harassment is.

"A lot of it is due to lack of education and knowledge on this topic. It is a legal concept that many of us do not take a class on. There are also many misconstrued ideas going around," said Linda Kaczor, a Ph.D. in clinical psychology.

The Office of Affirmative Action defines sexual harassment as "the use of sexual advances, request for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- 1) submission is made a term or a condition of an individual's employment or academic evaluation
- 2) submission to or rejection by an individual is used as a basis for employment or educational decision
- 3) such conduct interferes with an individual's work or academic performances by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or academic environment."

If a student feels that he or she is being sexually harassed or has any questions about sexual harassment, he or she can call the Office of Affirmative Action or the Sexual Harassment Network at (617) 373-2133.

"The student population now is not the same as what it was when the Institute was established, in terms of their political awareness and their real-life experiences," said Ms. Petty-Edwards.

Students agree.

**"African-American students complain about not having anything on campus...but the Institute is right here."**

"I guess that this place doesn't really appeal to the students like it used to," said Emile Emery, Sophomore, work-study student at the Institute. "I think that it's bad that a lot of people don't come. They need to support this place, the same amount of support they give the Student Center."

Many contemporary students see the Institute as an option where as the founding students saw it as a necessity for surviving at Northeastern during a time when the total black student enrollment was less than 100.

Enrollment of African-American students is still not equal to the number of whites accepted.

"I strongly feel that students should become involved with the activities at the Institute," said Stephanie Pierre-Jean, 19, Speech Pathology major. "African-American students complain about not having anything on campus, yet the Institute is right here."

So, why don't students go?

"Some people may feel embarrassed, other people may not feel welcomed, and sometimes there's just no reason to go," explained Naikiesha Bruce, Sophomore, from Long Island, N.Y.

At the most recent NBSA (Northeastern Black Student Association) meeting, the primary topic of discussion was this unfortunate situation the Institute is facing. The platform has been opened and some believe that input can be the beginning step to solving the problem. A goal that some hope can be accomplished by the next reunion.

**P.E.A.C.E.**

**Positive Energy Always Creates Elevation**

# BLACK FACTS

## Bet Ya Didn't Know

Compiled by Tamika Cameron

- 1630** Massachusetts passed the first law protecting slaves who fled brutal treatment by their masters.
- 1806** The African Meeting House, Boston, MA, is the first major building in Boston to be constructed entirely by blacks.
- 1817** First abolitionist newspaper was the philanthropist.
- 1845** Macon B. Allen of Worcester, MA was the first black formally admitted to the bar in any state on May 3, 1945.
- 1860** There are approximately 4.4 million blacks in about 4 million are slaves.
- 1893** Daniel Hale Williams was the first person to perform successful open-heart surgery.
- 1964** Black journalist Carl T. Rowan of Minnesota was appointed director of the United States Information Agency.
- 1969** Moneta J. Sleet, Jr. was the first black journalist to win a Pulitzer Prize for a feature photograph.
- 1984** Oprah Winfrey became first black woman to host a nationally syndicated weekday talk show.
- 1992** Carol Moseley Braun becomes first black women to sit on the Senate.

# BI-COSTAL VERNACULAR

EAST	WEST	LITERARY CORRECT
"WYLIN"	"TRIPPIN"	ACTING IN AN INAPPROPRIATE MANNER
"WACK"	"OFF-BRANO"	AN ASSUMPTION THAT ONE IS OF A LESSER SOCIAL CLASS
"DAT'S PEACE" "DAT'S WHAS UP"	"OAT'S STRAIGHT"	APPEARS TO BE AN ACCEPTED NOTION
"I'LL HIT YOU OFF" "I'LL BREAK YOU OFF"	"I'LL SLIOE YOU SOME"	SURE I'LL LEND YOU SOME MONEY
"BLAZIN"	"FINE"	REFERRING TO THE APPROVAL OF THE OPPOSITE SEX'S PHYSICAL APPEARANCE
"PEACE"	"AUOI 5000" "I'M A SHAKE THE SPOT"	I'M LEAVING AT THE PRESENT TIME
"KIO"	"PLAYA"	MALE SPECIES
"SHORTY"	"LAOY"	FEMALE SPECIES
"IGGIN' ME"	"YOU WORKIN' MY NERVES"	AT THIS POINT YOU ARE BECOMING AN IRRITATION
"OAT'S MY PEEP"	"THAT'S MY OOG"	HAPPENS TO BE A GOOD FRIEND OF SOMEONE'S
"WHAT'S OA DILLY"	"WHAT'S UPPR?"	HOW ARE YOU DOING TOOAY?
"WHIP"	"RIDE"	AUTOMOBILE
"BUSTED"	"TEEO"	PHYSICAL APPEARANCE THAT'S DISAPPROVED OF
"AHMA 'BOUT TO BOUNCE"	"I'M 'BOUT TO SHAKE"	I'M LEAVING THE PREMISES
"I'M OIPPEO"	"I'M GEARED UP" "I'M G'O UP"	I HAVE ON A NICE OUTFIT
"BENJAMINS"	"I STAY CLOCKIN' DEM FIOOIES" or "A BIG FACE"	PREFERENCE IN OBTAINING \$100 BILLS
"PHAT" "DA JAWN"	"TIGHT" or "PROPA"	WHAT YOUR EXPLAINING IS FLAWLESS

## Coming Events

February 25: ISO/CSO/BARKADA - Fashion Show at CSC Ballroom, 7:30pm.

March 9: Organizational Meeting, planning for NU Service Day, rm 333 CSC, 6 - 7pm.

March 12: Latino/a Student Cultural Center - Unity Potluck Dinner and show at the African-American Institute 6:30pm. Admission \$3

March 12: Off Da Hook Productions - Roller Skating Party at Chez Vous, 9pm - 12am. Admission \$5. Money due by February 27. Contact Danyl Collings (in the CSO Office).

April 11: UTSAV (South Asian Student Organization) - Cultural Show at the CSC Ballroom, 7 - 9:30pm.

April 24: ISO - Grand Ball Internationale at The Wang Center, 8:30pm - 12:30am.

## Just Clowning Around



photo credits unknown



# The Onyx Informer Celebrates 30 Years of The John D. O'Bryant African-American Institute

